

44 JUVENILE RAMBLES.

Look about, Billy, and see if you cannot find one. Ah! I thought your young eyes would not be long in discovering that reverend-looking creature. See how majestic he appears; he continues here in solitude all the day, hating the delightful rays of the sun, against which he cannot look, and therefore he goes abroad only in the night-time, when other birds are gone to rest. Yet the owl is not to be despised; for he is useful in his kind, by living upon those mice, which would otherwise be very injurious to the farmers, in getting among their corn.

I suppose you heard the cuckow in the spring, though he is now silent; for we are told, that he gets his voice by sucking other birds eggs, and that as soon as the birds have done laying, he begins to be hoarse, and soon loses his voice entirely. It is a lazy bird, for so far from taking the trouble to bring up its own young, it does not even hatch them, but the hen lays her eggs in other birds nests.

Look

JUVENILE RAMBLES. 45

Look at that pretty robbin. How tame he is! I wish I had a bit of bread to give him! You are right, my dear, they do say, "that the robbin and the wren are God's cock and hen;" but this is founded on a mistake, for there are hen robbers as well as cock robbers, and cock wrens as well as hen wrens. They are two different kinds of birds, and no ways related to each other, which I beg you to remember.

There are screech owls and bats, and some other birds, which by some ignorant people are said to be ominous, by making a hideous noise, or flapping against the windows of a sick person, thereby denoting that there will be a death in that house. But I would advise you, my dear children, never to believe any such idle stories; for it is impious to suppose, that God would put it in the power of these ignorant animals to foretel what he has, in his great wisdom, thought fit to conceal from us. What I have here said of  
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